

Series I
Correspondence,
1932-1973

Box 2, Folder 4

June 25, 1948 -
August 19, 1948

0 1 0 0

25 June 1948

Dear Olie:

It is extremely sad to me to write this letter to you as, about the time you receive it, you will be retiring from your illustrious life as a naval officer of the United States. However, you will be in wonderful company as Admiral Spruance will be retiring on the same day.

I am writing this letter to you to wish you all happiness in the retirement which you have so well earned, and to hope that should the Nation need you, you will be available for service and advice for many years to come.

Of course, I knew that you were retiring, but for some reason I awakened the other night at 2 or 3 in the morning, turned on the radio, and heard an announcement from some Chicago station that another famed commander of World War II was about to retire. The announcer discussed you somewhat and named you. It was then, in the quiet of the night, that I had a chance to think of what all of this meant. It means simply this - that the leaders of World War II are gradually removing themselves from active life, and are turning over their responsibilities to hands which everyone hopes will be big enough to hold them.

I want to thank you for all your loyalty to me through the years of my acquaintance with you and more particularly for asking me to serve as your Chief of Staff during those unforgettable days when we took Peleliu, Leyte, Lingayen, and Okinawa. I shall ever remain indebted to you for thinking of me at that time and for giving me an opportunity to serve with you in your great victories. If I don't obtain anything else in life, certainly no one can take away from me the memory of those days when we battled the Rising Sun so successfully in many a battle area.

I know that you would be the first to admit that part of your success is due to Betty, who so many of us think is one of the most wonderful wives that anyone could ever have. Had I been smart enough or lucky enough to have captured someone like her, I probably today would have had more success in the Navy than I at present enjoy. You may tell her for me that I regret that she did not have a sister, and if she did, that she did not bring her around soon enough.

It was nice to see you out on the Coast and to note that although your ankles were still swollen, your eye and spirit were sharp and high. I watched you enter the University of California

0101

Bowl with President Truman, and it seemed to me that you overshadowed him. You looked good that day, and, so far as I could observe, gave no sign of any physical frailty. Take care of yourself and let me know what your new address will be so that I may not lose you in the mad shuffle which is the Navy today.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever,

Your Old Friend,

Vice Admiral J.B. Oldendorf
Commander Western Sea Frontier
Federal Building
San Francisco, California

0102

29 June 1948

Dear "Father" Wilson:

Upon my return from my trip to California I was delighted to discover on my desk a prayer book of Edward the Sixth. I was also delighted to note that it was a present from you. As I looked over the book I was reminded of the discussions which we and your beloved wife had over the astonishing--to me--fact that the prayer book of today and that of long ago are so identical. As I looked them over today I am still impressed with that extraordinary fact, and yet necessarily it should be so because the foundation of our church was long ago and ideas of faith should not change.

I have not quite understood the reason for the differentiation between the 1549 and the 1552 prayers, but I promise you that I shall study the two versions with intense interest and affection.

You were indeed kind to have gone to this great labor for me, but I am not surprised; kindness and thoughtfulness are synonymous with you and Mrs. Wilson. I should, therefore, expect nothing else.

I shall be around in a day or so to personally thank you both for this gesture of friendship. I can assure you that it is appreciated and returned to the fullest.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Rev. Andrew Chalmers Wilson
Ayrault House
45 Catherine St.
Newport, R.I.

0103

1 July 1948

Dear Southwick:

Captain Morison, the Navy historian, has been in my office and asked permission to obtain the tracing of Plate IV of our action on the Coral Sea. I have told him that I saw no reason why he cannot borrow the tracing from which this plate was made.

Lieutenant Pineau, USNR, who is one of Captain Morison's assistants, will be in to see you to obtain this tracing.

Thank you very much for your extremely gracious remarks concerning our Battle of the Coral Sea. I appreciate it very much indeed, as do the high command of the War College. You will be glad to know that you are not alone in your high praise of this work.

As ever,

Your Old Friend,

R. W. Bates

Capt. E.P. Southwick
Room 2635
Bureau of Naval Personnel
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

0104

1 July 1948

Dear Admiral Nimitz:

I was sorry that I did not have a chance to see you on Treasure Island and to watch you being painted by our mutual friend Albert Murray. However, I did see the picture, and although only the rough outlines and the head were completed, I nevertheless thought that the head was the most remarkable resemblance to the original that I ever saw. I pointed out some things in the rough draft of the portrait which I thought were not you, and Murray agreed thoroughly. You will be interested to know that I met Murray in Washington and we went to New York together on the train. He is extremely proud of his success in painting you. He said that you made a wonderful subject, and he was gratified that you sat for him.

I thought the picture of Admiral Oldendorf was good, but I did not particularly like the pose as, in my opinion, he should have been painted on the bridge of his ship rather than at a planning desk, for during most actions that is where he stood. Otherwise it was a good job and I am gratified that Admiral Oldendorf received the recognition from the Navy Department and from you, which permitted such a painting to be made of him for history. He certainly well deserves such recognition.

It was awfully nice to have the privilege of seeing you there at your office. You are looking very well indeed, and I am delighted that your semi-retirement has in no way dimmed your outlook on life.

I appreciated your remarks to me concerning my own future. Very frankly, I have been in a quandary for some time over this matter, as I am beginning to believe that for my own good I should get out, job or no job. I have found out thru a number of sources that I am always in the near-finals for selection to Rear Admiral, but if this is true I never seem to have enough friends around to pull me over the fence. On the other hand, I have been told by many officers of competence, of which Admiral Kalbfus heads the list, that my work in the analysis of the naval battles is so fine that I have no right to fold up when no one is available to replace me.

I indicated the other day to some of the high command of the Navy Department that I may decide to retire in the not too distant future, although I hoped to complete the analysis of Savo Island first. I do not desire to be thrown out. I also said that should they need me I might agree to come back as a Rear Admiral which will

0105

be my rank on the retired list. I hear pros and cons in this matter, but nothing definite.

I have remained on the active list for four reasons. One reason is that I love the Navy, what it stands for and its associations; the second is that I thought that I might be useful should war come; the third is that I believe that I am accomplishing some good by remaining on duty here analyzing the battles; and the fourth is that both Admiral Denfeld and Admiral Conolly told me that I had been treated unjustly during the war and that I was going to be promoted. Well, you can readily see how accurate their predictions were!

Admiral Spruance is retiring on Wednesday, and the Navy loses her ablest officer below 5 stars on the active list. He is so smart and understanding; so well balanced and so experienced, that I view his departure with concern. On the other hand, I am reassured by the fact that the Army called back General MacArthur from the retired list and Grant from the resigned list to command in war. Should the need arise perhaps we will do the same with Raymond A. Spruance.

With warmest personal regards to yourself, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Fleet Admiral C. W. Nimitz
Federal Building
Civic Center
San Francisco, Calif.

0106

2 July 1948

Dear R.C.:

I am writing you for two reasons; one is purely informative, the other semi-official. The informative part is to say that your good friend Admiral Spruance left yesterday for the coast and is now no longer on the active list of the Navy. Needless to say, his departure is heavily missed. All of us feel that should war come in the immediate future he will probably be called back to duty as was General MacArthur. The newspaper writeups about him gave a pretty good idea of what the farewell here consisted of, and I presume you saw them. He and the Mrs. are driving to the coast by easy stages and at present are in Vermont. Rumor hath it that they will probably arrive in California sometime in August. They evidently do not plan to go to Washington, so I shall convey their "Aloha" to you now.

The semi-official thing was that as I recollect, you were writing a resume of the battles of World War II. I want to put in the front of my Midway a short resume of the battle. Perhaps what you have drawn up could be amplified somewhat to fit my scheme. If you haven't done anything on this yet why just forget it, as I plan to work on it over the weekend. The thought of this is mostly Admiral Spruance and Admiral Smith's, who feel that there should be a brief of the action so that any who pick the book up will be able to know what it is about. Today we know what the Battle of the Coral Sea was, tomorrow our successors may know nothing.

It was nice to see you down there in Washington and to renew an old acquaintance. I hope this letter finds you and your Mrs. in the very best of health. As ever,

Your Old Friend,

R. W. Bates

Captain R.C. Parker
Office of Chief of Naval Operations
Room 2841
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

0107

2 July 1948

Dear Fuzzy:

I suppose that you have wondered for a long time as to where I have been since I left you and why I haven't written you before. I think I shall answer the latter query first to say that I had planned to write you upon my return, and to tell you what we plan to do concerning your comments on the Aleutians. However, they suddenly changed my dates for flight to the coast and I didn't get a chance to do what you must have expected.

As regards the first query, Admiral Spruance was delighted to hear that you felt that what was included in the Aleutian Campaign for the few days of the Midway Battle was correct, and he read your typewritten comment with interest. I then showed him what I planned to put into the book concerning that time and he accepted not only the comments for the critical section but also the battle lesson which I produced. Both are very close to what you said and thought, and both, I think, will please you.

I really enjoyed my stay with you and I do hope that you will let me come up there again this summer. You and Betty are a wonderful pair and it did my heart good to see you together. I appreciated my stay there with you a lot more than this poor typewriter can explain. Just to see you, brought back memories of long ago when we worked together for our Flag. You may not remember this but I think that you were the first officer to invite me as a midshipman to dine with him in his home, and even at this moment I can see you as a Lieutenant carving a chicken at Sunday luncheon. What a friend you have always been. Betty is a darling, and her devotion to you is so evident that it did my old heart good. Her menus are delicious.

I went out to the coast and I endeavored to get in contact with your sister, Mrs. Otis, but to no avail, until by accident at the Officers' Club on the Naval Base I encountered her. She was giving a small dinner, so I went to her table. She was awfully glad to hear about you and Betty, and seemed very pleased that you were so happy. God bless her, she appears to have a very deep affection for her brother.

While in California I had the good fortune to have a long talk with Admirals Nimitz, Beary, Oldendorf and Durgin. Admiral Oldendorf is retiring on 1 July for physical disability. He has

0108

been a fine commander and has served his Flag most gloriously. I am awfully fond of him, and I hope that he is of me. I wish him all happiness in his remaining years.

The West Coast is perfectly beautiful at this time. The mountains were full of snow; the sun was shining; the fields unusually green; the air full of life, and I had difficulty in dragging myself back to Newport. However, now that I am back the picture has changed and I am quite content here for the nonce.

The Midway book has not gone to Washington yet to be printed because Admiral Spruance wouldn't look at the final draft until he left. In my mind he deliberately blocked it so that it would be published under another President. It gives him a very good break, but it was written with the truth in mind and without any attempt to protect anyone. Any protecting in the book was done by the high command here and not really by me.

Admiral Spruance left yesterday. He is now on the retired list. He is a wonderful gentleman and has done a tremendous good for this college. It is my hope that while I am here his effect will remain. Hoke Smith is temporarily President until the arrival of the new President, who has not as yet been designated, but who Tommy Sprague told me was to be Admiral Don Beary. Admiral Beary commanded the fast logistics group in the Western Pacific.

Take care of yourself, and let me hear from you soon. My warmest regards to you both. As ever,

Your Old Friend,

R. W. Bates

Admiral Robert A. Theobald
Peaches Point
Marblehead, Mass.

0109

2 July 1948

My dear Mr. Riso:

I have your letter saying that my suit is ready for a second try-on, but as it does not seem possible for me to get there in the immediate future I think it probably best that you send it to me now. If I find anything wrong with it I will be back down there one of these days and I shall then expect to have you see it on me. Naturally, any modifications can be made then.

With many thanks for your kindness in this matter, I am,

Very truly yours,

R. W. Bates
Captain, U.S.N.

Mr. Eugene Riso
Riso & Fischer
12-14 East 46th St.
New York, N.Y.

0110



YUKON 6-6046

W. CURTIS BRYON
MANAGER

Richard Bennett

POST AT POWELL
SAN FRANCISCO

0111

Hortense
Miss Allen
Vol 6-1146

0 1 1 2

6 July 1948

My dear Miss Allen:

Since speaking to you on the phone with reference to my new sport coat, I have had the coat examined by my Newport tailor and he verifies completely the impressions which I gained upon first trying it on.

The tailor says that the coat is vastly oversized, that the sleeve armpits are at least two inches too low, and that you cannot raise the shoulders to bring the armpits up without shortening the coat in an unfit manner. In addition, the buttons are too low. I told your Mr. Bryon of your San Francisco office where I wished the buttons, but he was insistent where he was going to put them, and he did. I am beginning to wonder as I look at my coat, and I remember some of Mr. Bryon's remarks, as to whether this coat is in fact custom made. It appears to me that it may be a standard form modified to suit my curves, which I regret to say are evident in some places. The workmanship in the coat seems excellent and the material also. As I told you on the phone, I had hoped to have this coat refitted or to obtain another coat from you, but after talking to the tailor and other competent people in the tailoring game, I am of the opinion that this coat cannot be refitted to suit me and will always be unsatisfactory. Therefore I wish to return it completely. My experience with a coat without a try-on, even by the Richard Bennett methods, is so unsatisfactory as to cause me to make the decision now that whereas I should like to have a new coat, I cannot get to New York for a try-on now. My original measurements evidently are incorrect. Therefore I should appreciate a check for the coat plus mailage, and we will consider the matter dropped. Perhaps Mr. Bennett, who is evidently a capable custom tailor himself, would be interested in knowing the details of this affair.

I have been trying to obtain a sport coat for some time. I went to Brooks Bros. and they said that they could custom tailor me one but could not make one on a standard form, as my figure was somewhat different than the average. I tried other firms with the same result. Custom tailoring required anywhere from 3 to 6 months. On my recent visit to San Francisco I saw your firm's name and looked over your shop there. The whole setup looked excellent. In addition, I was reminded of a magazine article which I had read concerning your methods. I went in and spoke

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to your Mr. W. Curtis Bryon. Mr. Bryon is a very personable man. He told me that there was no trouble in getting this coat delivered to me ready to wear. He said that there might be some minor changes which some day I could have adjusted in a New York office. We discussed the materials and finally picked out a cloth. We then went downstairs and I stood in front of some mirrors, and the tailors measured me. After this was done, Mr. Bryon asked for a deposit. I said that I did not understand this deposit situation as there was nothing to indicate the need nor was it my habit to pay in advance. He said that it was always customary to do so and that he would charge me \$20.00. I told him that I thought it was very poor business to operate that way, as it gave the appearance of a fly-by-night organization. However, I paid the \$20.00. He told me that the coat would be made in New York. I did not realize that the coat would then be shipped back to San Francisco and then mailed to me in the East. The result of this was that upon receiving my coat I found that it had been sent C.O.D. I had to pay the Railway Express \$47.50 to complete the purchase price of my coat, plus about \$4.00 for express charges. Thus I paid \$71.50 approx. for a coat which I had never even seen nor was even permitted to try on. This may seem good business to Mr. Richard Bennett, but I doubt it, as evidenced by the remarks which you personally made over the phone to me.

For your information, last evening a prominent New York gentleman in Newport was talking about getting a sport coat. I told him of my unhappy experience with Richard Bennett, and he said that he was distressed to hear it as he had planned to try out the new system which he had read in "Life". I told him that he could still try it because he could get a measurement and a try-on, but that my misfortune was that I was unable to obtain a try-on. Had I obtained a try-on I still would have rejected the coat because the buttons are too low, the pockets too low, and the entire setup not in accordance with the instructions which I gave at the time. I ordered a sport coat, not an overcoat.

I want to thank you very much for your kind assistance to me in this matter. I want you to know that Mr. Bennett apparently made no mistake in appointing you as his secretary to handle troublesome cases like mine, because your voice soothed my savage breast. Very frankly, I am very upset about this coat, as I wished to wear it over the Fourth of July holidays in Newport where I am now on duty, but alas, such was not to be the case.

You may tell Mr. Bennett that I have no doubt that his firm is quite capable of making an excellent product, and I would be willing to try it again were I able to obtain a try-on in a New York office.

0114

I would like to suggest that it seems rather silly to have a coat built in New York and mailed to San Francisco and then back East again merely to give the Railway Express Co. about \$4.00 expressage.

Finally, where shall I send the coat?

Very truly yours,

R. W. Bates
Captain, U.S.N.

Miss Hortense Allen
Richard Bennett
Custom Tailors
New York City, N.Y.

0115

7 July 1948

Dear Frances and Judge:

Now that I am reestablished in Newport and at the War College, I am seizing this opportunity to drop you a note to express to you my appreciation of your courtesy in giving me that party at the Officers' Club. Needless to say, I really enjoyed the party and was particularly pleased with my success at Bingo. You may not know this, but I am one of the Newport Bingo champions and have frequently won bottles of whiskey here, so I should have felt rather badly had I not been a suitable representative of Newport in the Alameda contest.

It was wonderful to see you and Judge and to see how happy you are. It is also wonderful to realize how well you have re-oriented yourselves to the new situation which retirement from the Navy brought to you. I will be out of here presently, and I have no doubt that I will have a harder job than you had to reorganize myself.

Admiral Spruance has left the College and is retired from the Navy for good. However, he is being retired with full pay of about \$13,000 per year, which he said would be very pleasing to him and makes his future years much easier. I am awfully glad that Congress remembered him in the end.

The Spruances are quite interested in seeing you both and they spoke most highly of you. Mrs. Spruance, in particular, says that she cannot wait to see you. She is a wonderful woman and will be badly missed in this area no matter who succeeds the command of the War College. She will need your help to re-orient herself from the high position of president here to an outside position, even though a heroic one.

I am very pleased, Judge, that you were able to read the Battle of the Coral Sea. Mother says that you made a friendly remark about it which I like because I believe you to be not only a competent critic but also an honest one. Midway is now finished, but my secretary has to type it for photography purposes which will delay its arrival in Washington another month.

Things are going along pretty well at the War College. The new classes are here now and the College actually starts next week. Admiral Spruance, however, is sadly missed. I hope the feeling that his guiding hand is not here will disappear, and that we will

0116

all feel the effects of his presence for a long time.

My section has started on Savo Island, but whether I shall finish it before I decide to attempt to fold up, I have not as yet decided.

The weather here has been perfectly wonderful, but I haven't enjoyed it as much as I normally would because I have felt sort of "pooped". I really have felt this way more or less since my flight back from Washington where I flew at such a high altitude. I hope that in a few days I will feel better.

I hope that this letter finds you both in the best of health and continuing to enjoy the freedom from responsibility and the happiness which association with each other and one's friends makes possible. You are a wonderful pair and I always congratulate myself that I know you. As ever,

Your Old Friend,

Captain & Mrs. Herbert W. Underwood
1260 St. Charles St.
Alameda, Calif.

0117

7 July 1948

Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of your letter of July 5th and I am a little surprised at it because I thought that I had explained to Miss Allen the complete inadequacy of the coat. She is a very nice person over the telephone and certainly is an asset to your firm. She told me that your firm would refund the money, or build me a new coat, or refit this one if it could be done satisfactorily to me.

I addressed her a letter yesterday, which I presume that she will show to you, which gives the complete story of the coat. The coat is so bad that the people that I show it to go into convulsions of laughter. It is agreed that it cannot be refitted.

I cannot get to one of your New York stores to endeavor to make a refit at this time and if I did the cost would probably be about \$30.00 additional, counting railway fare and hotel charges. However, the War College is in full swing and little time is available for New York trips.

As I said to Miss Allen in my letter to her, many things about the coat are unsatisfactory, not the least of which are the two buttons, the top one of which is almost at my navel. This is probably all right for a "Naval" man, but, despite the humor, it is not satisfactory to me, particularly because of my prominent chest.

I appreciate your letter, but I regret that I did not make myself fully clear to Miss Allen in pointing out that the coat is so oversized as to be non-refittable. I suggest that you ask to see my letter if you have not already done so.

I must impress on you with all seriousness, the disappointment I feel in the loss of this coat at a time when I need it. The inconvenience to me is far greater than your letter would imply. In addition, dissatisfied customers are scarcely good advertisements.

Very truly yours,

R. W. Bates
Captain, U.S.N.

Mr. John F. McDonough
Vice President, Richard Bennett
3 East 44th St.
New York 17, N.Y.

0118

13 July 1948 .

Dear Mr. McDonough:

Thank you very much for your letter of 9 July 1948. Your decision in this matter is exactly what I had expected from a firm of consequence, and I am appreciative.

I have returned the coat to 3 East 44th Street attention to yourself, so I presume that you will receive it shortly.

I paid out \$20.00 as an initial deposit, then \$47.50 to complete the payment. This latter was paid C.O.D. to the Railway Express. Also \$4.39 postage. The refund, therefore, should be \$71.89.

I shall be happy some day when I am in New York to try out your system again and particularly your PhotoMetric system. I believe that you are excellent tailors and it was for that reason that I placed the original order.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Mr. John F. McDonough
Vice President, Richard Bennett
3 East 44th St.
New York 17, N.Y.

0119

14 July 1948

McClean, Goldberg, Bowen Groceries
San Francisco, California

Gentlemen:

Please send me to this address two of your salami sausages similar to the type which I purchased some months ago. If you have a Langios cheese, I should appreciate obtaining one wheel. It is my understanding that a wheel costs in the vicinity of about \$5.50. I have a charge account with your concern.

Very truly yours,

R.W. Bates
Captain, USN

0120

14 July 1948

Langios Cheese Company
Langios, Oregon

Gentlemen:

I have had the good fortune to obtain some of your blue cheese, and I have found it so superior that I am anxious to obtain a couple of wheels.

I should appreciate your courtesy if you would sent two of these wheels to me at the above address.

Upon the receipt of these cheeses, I will send you a check in full payment. If there is any question as to my financial responsibility, the American Trust Company of Alameda, California, will advise.

Very truly yours,

R.W. Bates
Captain, U.S.N.

0121

19 July 1948

Brooks Brothers
346 Madison Ave. Cor. 44th St.
New York 17, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I am sending to you by separate correspondence two of your collar attached shirts, which I purchased about a year ago. The collar of one of these shirts is fraying and the collar buttons on the other shirt have torn away.

I am returning these to you with the hope that you'll be able to repair them.

I should like to invite particular attention to the short life of these shirts and to the apparent weakness of the material. In this connection, about two months ago I brought another one of these shirts into your New York office. After an inspection your representative repaired this shirt at no cost to me. I certainly hope that similar action will be taken in this case.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES
Captain, USN

0122

20 July 1948

Dear Southwick:

This is merely a notification to tell you that I will be down there, I think, within three weeks to bring the completed draft of the Battle of Midway to you for production. I presume that you will do it by photo-offset, and this time I wish to increase the number of copies to 750.

In view of the tense world situation I should like very much to have this work given a priority so that it can get in the hands of our commanders as soon as possible.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever,

Yours sincerely,

R. W. Bates

Capt. E.P. Southwick
Room 2635
Bureau of Naval Personnel
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

0123

20 July 1948

Dear Chick:

It was with a great deal of surprise and interest that I noted your request for retirement was to become effective on 1 September. It is too bad that you have found it necessary and wise to make this decision. The Navy needs men like you--men of training experience, character and success. It was for that reason that I called you to ascertain the truth of the article and to assure you that whatever you do will always have a deep interest with me.

I have called you up several times when I was in Washington, but invariably you were away, and reports have it that you were generally in Europe. I spoke to your sister, Gladys, once. I haven't seen or heard of you since.

With your retired pay it is quite apparent that you can do better on the outside than the inside. At least you can do as well.

Speed Caldwell, retired Major General of the Marines, was here the other day and he has taken a job with the Avon Old Farm School in Connecticut where he will instruct in history. He gets \$2700. per year to start, plus a charming house and all meals for himself and his wife. I estimated that with his retired pay of \$5,000 he has the equivalent of \$11,000, and only works nine months per year. What could be more delightful than that?

You can probably get a much bigger job than Speed in your area, and as you own your own house in Richmond, you won't even need the house. Perhaps you can go to the Richmond Life Insurance Company or some place like that and get a personnel job similar to that taken by Julian Wheeler at Worcester, Mass.

I hope to be down there in about two weeks with the Battle of Midway to be printed, and I'll see you then.

With warmest personal regards and best wishes for your happiness in civilian life, I am as ever,

Your Old Pal,

R.Adm.R. O. Glover
Hydrographic Office
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

0124

22 July 1948

Frederic's Inc.
Fifth Ave. and 46th St.
New York, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

Perhaps as a good jeweler you feel it necessary to deliver a good watch rather than to mail it. However, I cannot get to New York for some time and the need of the watch becomes all-important. May I ask you, therefore, unless there is some vital reason why you should not do so, to send me my watch by the best approved method which you select?

Very truly yours,

R. W. Bates,
Captain, USN.

0125

23 July 1948

Dear David:

I am writing to you for several reasons, not the least important of which is to tell you that you are badly missed here, as I am finding it necessary to drill into your successors the fundamental truths in the solution of the military problem which we have here in the Department of Analysis. Commander Cobb is flexible, and I think will learn quickly, but the other gentleman is stubborn, and may not be as flexible as I had anticipated.

I want to thank you for fixing the thermos bottle. I happened to pick it up a few days after you had left and discovered to my surprise that it had been repaired. We have used it to a degree, and it would do your heart good to note the frequency with which Mrs. Keith eyes this jug. Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness in having it repaired. It was a wise move, not only because we will all enjoy it but also it keeps you ever before us.

I am being somewhat bothered by the fact that no one seems able to locate the copy of the original rough draft of Midway which you and Bill Ashford worked on so long. During the re-write here, errors show up in the completed copy, and when I have endeavored to find out what was written in the corrected issue, I have invariably been stopped because of its absence. I recollect that you apparently had that copy in the file cabinet here, as on several occasions you brought it out. Surely you did not take that with you, as it is a copy which is even more confidential than the final edition will be, as it contains matter which was not released by the President of the College. I therefore request that if you have that copy, you send it here as soon as possible as we need it for reference now. If you do not have this book, can you tell me where it is or whether it was destroyed. The latter I cannot believe, as nothing can be destroyed in this section without my prior approval. The reasons for this are obvious.

I hope that you will enjoy your new assignment. It is certainly well deserved, and I have little doubt but that you will be highly successful and supremely happy. All of the office force join in our expressions of good will, and as for myself, my warmest personal regards to both you and Mrs. Richardson.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. Bates

Cdr. D.C. Richardson
Commander Fleet Air West Coast
NAS, San Diego, Calif.

0126

23 July 1948

Gentlemen:

About ten days ago I filled out a form which you had sent me concerning an accident between myself and a car belonging to the Vets Taxi Organisation here in Newport. Prior to filling out the above form, I communicated by telephone with a representative in your claim department. The name of the representative I have forgotten, but I recollect a charming feminine voice answered me and provided me with advice. I now wish to register a definite complaint. The accident occurred about one month ago. The Vets taxicab No.252, which collided with me, was insured by the Rhode Island Mutual Insurance Co.; agents here, Cornelius Murphy, telephone 777. I was asked by that company to fill out a form concerning the accident, which I did. I made a statement similar to the one which is attached to your form. From that day to this I have heard nothing either from you nor from the Rhode Island Mutual. This seems to me to be an incredible state of affairs.

I asked the Rhode Island Mutual to have someone see me and to look at my car or examine it. I have seen no one.

As a matter of interest, I acted as adjuster for automobile accidents between the Navy and civilians in Hawaii for two years and I have a pretty good idea of how adjusting should be done.

It is quite possible that the Vets Taxi has produced a couple of witnesses who will make statements that I did not stop at the stop sign, which by the way is not a "full stop" sign. I hear rumors to this effect, and yet at the time of the accident when the driver of the Vets taxi queried the few possible witnesses there as to what went on, no one answered any of his questions.

I was unable at the time of the accident to pick up any witnesses because Admiral Spruance, the President of the Naval War College, was giving his final dinner prior to his detachment, and I was a guest. I had started early and was in no rush, but so much time was lost in the accident that I had to proceed without delay so as not to be late. It was my belief at the time, however, that no one was going to venture any statement whatsoever, and it was my further belief at the time that the taxi driver was not attempting to obtain any witnesses. I think that you will find that he was sent back by the owner to try and locate some witnesses. I could be wrong in this, but I don't think so, as the driver seemed completely uninformed as to what to do in the case of an

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accident. It required one of the people on the sidewalk to tell him what to do. I have not been invited to see one of these witnesses, if such exist. It appears to me that it might be a simple thing to show that the witnesses, if any, were on the south side of Marlboro Street, and therefore could not possibly have known whether I stopped or not. Certainly the driver of the taxi knew nothing, and his hands were so shaky as to plainly indicate that he didn't know what went on at all. He was speeding down the road, was caught by surprise, put on his brakes too late, and ran into my car on the right hand side. The matter is as simple as that.

I don't care particularly what the decision is in this case. I cannot see though how any man who hit me on my right hand side could have had his car under control or could be excused from responsibility. It is not the \$25.00, which I may be forced to pay which bothers me. It is the principle of the thing which I am pressing. In my opinion this taxi was violating the law, and I could well have been killed. Cars are constantly violating the laws on this street, as I have been watching them with interest recently. There is no police action whatsoever. We talk of the great death rate over the nation, and yet when it happens at our own front door we appear to have little interest.

Your company has long been recognized for its pre-eminent position in the field of both fire and accident insurance. Surely it still desires to maintain that position! And yet who is looking out for me?

With expectations of hearing from you soon, I am

Very truly yours,

R. W. Bates

Hartford Accident & Indemnity Co.
Providence, R.I.

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27 July 1948

Dear Mr. Bryon:

Thank you very much for your letter of July 20th in which you regret your handling of my sport coat. Naturally your apology is accepted.

I wish to state here what I told your home office, so that you may know the picture from my end. I advised the home office that I had purchased this coat from you and that you had been very pleasant, but that, after all measurements had been made, you had called for a deposit. I stated that I had objected to paying a deposit but that you had insisted that it was the policy. I further told your home office that when I received the coat I had to pay \$67.50 cash additional to the \$20.00 already given and that I had to pay \$4.50 plus mail charges for a coat I had not seen. I said that when I had tried the coat on it fitted me like a sack; that the two buttons were so low as to have the top one at my navel. I said further that I had objected in San Francisco to the low position for these buttons, but my objections in that matter appeared to have had little effect.

The management said that they would take the matter in hand, and they have refunded me all charges. The coat has been returned as highly unsatisfactory. I consider the matter closed.

Very truly yours,

R. W. Bates

Mr. W. Curtis Bryon
345 Powell St.
San Francisco 2, Calif.

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13 August 1948

Dear Reggie:

It was wonderful to see both you and Elsa up here, and I can assure you that it did all of us good. You are a great couple and have many friends, as was evidenced everywhere. Everyone seemed to wish to do something for you, which surprised me somewhat because it was my understanding that you wished to remain in seclusion. I told Gus White that you had said that. He laughed and said in a most friendly way, "Reggie's idea of seclusion is to be as far in the public eye as possible."

I was awfully sorry that I personally was unable to obtain a date from you where I could do something for you. Of course I was severely handicapped in the beginning because I had those two Portuguese officers for a week and had to be with them all the time and arrange their entertainment from breakfast on. Then I had Vice Admiral Carranza for two days, and it was through me that you were invited to the Mestas. I made out the invitation list, with the exception of a few names which she added herself. I am mindful, however, of the fact that you said you would be up here another day and will give me the opportunity then to have a dinner for you.

When you were here I forgot to tell you that I had seen our mutual friend Frannie Baer at the Bank of America when I was in San Francisco. He looked fine and seemed awfully glad to see me. He said that he would be in New York in October and would then endeavor to get in contact with both you and me. Perhaps we can have a reunion in New York.

I am going to Washington on Monday by air with my completed Battle of Midway, which will be published by the Bureau of Personnel in a month or so, I presume. Everyone who has read it has said that it is very superior. I hope that that will be the opinion of the Service at large. Doing these works is not easy, as my staff is being constantly changed and other matters are allowed to interpose, such as the Portuguese. However, we are all part of the machine which is working under limited help, and matters of this kind must be accepted for the good of the whole.

Needless to say, I was terribly disappointed when the Navy Department saw fit to remove your star. There is a rumor now that that star will be

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given to Admiral Beary. I think that for his work in the Pacific he is entitled to that recognition, but, I do not like having it at your expense. Having been demoted myself for no reason whatsoever, I cannot but know exactly how you feel about it. It is not a pleasant feeling, is it?

I plan to return from Washington on the morning of Wednesday, June 18th or Thursday, June 19th, and will stop at Mustin Field, Philadelphia and come over and see you on the matter concerning myself which you discussed with me at Admiral Bastedo's. I hope that you will be there.

I have a British Rear Admiral in tow now named B. B. Schofield. He is a very amusing fellow and you and he would get on famously. He tells some nice stories which have a little spice to them and may astonish some people. However, that is the British way, as no one knows better than you. He was at Casa Blanca, for example, and also at Sakashima Gunto with the British Fleet at Okinawa.

With warmest personal regards to both you and Elsa, I am as ever,

Your Old Friend,

V. Adm. James L. Kauffman
Commandant Fourth Naval District
Philadelphia, Pa.

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19 August 1948

Dear Harry:

I was awfully sorry that I didn't get a chance to see you and Margaret. I did not know when I was coming to Washington, but as I succeeded in finishing the Battle of Midway on Saturday, I decided to bring it down on Monday to get it in the press immediately. The Bureau of Personnel thoroughly concurred with that view, and in fact have decided to publish considerably more copies of Midway than were published of the Coral Sea. This, of course, is gratifying to me, as I am doing this job with the hope that I can convey to our successors some of the problems of command and the necessity for making an estimate of the situation, no matter how quickly done, in every situation. A Commander as successful as you can make decisions quite readily and often instantaneously--an inexperienced or less able commander than you will often find that it takes time to think a problem through along the lines of sound logical thinking. The Battle of Midway is somewhat longer than the Coral Sea, but it has met with the thorough approval of both Admiral Theobald and Admiral Spruance. I am awfully glad that it is completed because it was written under difficulties. My staff was changed twice during the write-up and I was the only continuity. Also, during the last two months my senior aviator was in the hospital.

We are now working on Savo Island, but when it will be completed, I cannot at the present time forecast. It is extremely controversial, but truthfully that doesn't bother me at all. I weigh all the facts, plot out all the information and then write what seems to me to be correct. In the case of Midway I had to defend my stand against Admirals Spruance, Smith and Brown in committee. When the Committee meetings were over, I had proved my position in every case. As a matter of fact, Admiral Smith told the student body after one of these meetings of what had occurred and the method of accomplishing it. He then said that at the end of the meeting the score stood--Bates 11--8 stars zero.

I was awfully pleased to hear your reaction to the book on the Coral Sea, as I appreciate your judgment very much. Very

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frankly, nothing could have pleased me more than your statement that you found it fair, as that is what I strive to accomplish. However, whether I succeed or not in that objective can only be the verdict of a competent reader.

I am extremely sorry that Chick Glover is leaving the Navy. I am very fond of him and of his wife. But Chick told me that he had weighed everything and was of the opinion that he was on the wrong team.

As for myself, I am still here as you can see. This is partially on your account. Your comments to me concerning the Navy and my place in it, which you made that night when you drove me home, sank quite deeply, and I have found it somewhat difficult to think of doing something else since then. You are very convincing!

When I get to Washington again, if I do, I shall look you up most directly. As a matter of fact, I did this time, as I wanted to take you and Margaret to dinner, but as you were golfing and as your butler said that you were dining out, I dropped the matter.

With warmest personal regards to you both, I am as ever,

Your Old Friend,

R. W. Bates

Vice Admiral Harry W. Hill
National War College
Washington, D.C.

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